



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GAIRLOCH & DISTRICT HERITAGE COMPANY LTD

13 May 2026

Gairloch Museum. 4.30pm.

<u>Present</u>	Allan Templeton; Corinna Annetts; Pauline Butler; Liz Forrest (Zoom); Peter Lynn; Roy Macintyre; Anne MacLennan; Gordon McIntosh; Sadie Paige; Jean Ross; Eilidh Smith (Zoom); Alastair Stephen.
<u>Apologies</u>	Guy Seaman; Scott Steedman; Ben Thomas.

The Board was informed that Guy has written to resign, as he is shortly moving outside of the area. He wished us 'all success in continuing the excellent reputation of the Museum'. We put on record our thanks and appreciation for his contributions and support over the years, particularly in premises and health and safety matters.

- Conflicts of Interest
No potential conflict of interest was declared with respect to the Agenda.
- Minutes of the Board meeting of 4 March 2026
The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March were agreed to be a correct record, proposed by Gordon and seconded by Jean. There were no matters arising that are not being considered at this meeting.
- Report of the Executive Group
The Executive Group met on 29 April. Notes from the meeting have been circulated to inform of progress on action points.
Further to this:
 - Planning consent has now been given for the hardstanding, information board and seat near Carn Dearg Youth Hostel, so completing the planning approval requirements for the Geological Timeline.
 - The Review of the Company Risk Register was accepted as a valid update on our current circumstances. It was proposed that, in the future, the format change from colour-coding identification of the 'risk' category to the more conventional numerical matrix approach. Sadie and Gordon agreed that they would take this forward in a way that will integrate with the 'Fragile to Flourishing' Museum Operating Model (AIM initiative) that is being considered by the Financial Sustainability Group.
- Financial report
Pete had provided reports on our income and expenditure to end April, with comparative figures. Early May has seen an increase in admissions and café income, with retail similar to last year, though with indications that people are being very cautious about their discretionary spend.
He and Corinna will prepare cash flow forecasts for the Roundhouse project, given the varying funding arrangements of each grant-giver. If all goes according to plan, related expenditure for the rest of 2026 will be to pay work undertaken by the architects. Corinna noted that management of the project will require a huge commitment of her time and that everyone will need to be mindful of this with respect to her other responsibilities and tasks.

Pete advised that, should it be necessary to provide updated valuations of the building, an external review of this had taken place as part of this year's insurance renewal, so we have a current figure.

5. Financial Strategy Group

Minutes of the FSG meeting of 20 March had been circulated. The next scheduled meeting is next week (20 May), when it is anticipated that the rationalisation of our bank accounts (as proposed by the Executive Group) will be discussed, to be ratified by the Board thereafter.

Marketing: various tourism-related contacts arising from the Glasgow trade fair were being followed up, with careful consideration given to the terms for group visits. Helen is also working on promoting our exhibitions to a wider audience.

6. Curator's report

Corinna's report has been circulated. It covered: Roundhouse funding update; Roundhouse publicity and press; Outreach; Digital interpretation; Acquisitions; Sector support; Access equipment (headphones); Turf grants; Rimmer Trust; Genealogy research; Geology timeline.

Further to this:

- i) Corinna was congratulated on securing several grants in recent weeks which enable us to continue the archaeology excavations research and, critically, support our 2027 Anniversary celebration ambitions. It is particularly pleasing to have the strong endorsement of Highland Council through the Community Regeneration Fund for the Roundhouse construction.
- ii) Discussions are underway with Highland Council planners to meet their requirements for dropped curbs to improve access to the Roundhouse site.
- iii) The grants from the Rimmer Trust will enable us to progress our Masterpiece Loan plans, including purchase of a new case and appropriate transportation. The painting of Loch Maree by McCulloch, currently in storage at Glasgow Life Museum, will, we hope, be the first of a series of prestigious paintings becoming part of our Exhibition programme.
- iv) Corinna has a couple of grant applications in mind to try to fill the gap in the Geology Trail funding. Personal donations might also be solicited. The Curry Trust, one of the funders already identified, wishes to be involved in the content of the interpretation panel.
- v) It transpires that, given our staffing model, we are not eligible to participate in Museums and Heritage Highlands 'Pathways to the Future' project.

7. Events and Outreach

Ell's updated record of events recently undertaken and planned (from March to July) was circulated. As always, there are many and varied activities on record.

The appointment of Andi Neate to the Wellbeing Coordinator post from October was welcomed. She is already well known to the WWW participants. Corinna and Anne are organising sessions until Andi's contract starts, with some external input. Corinna also passed on Sarah's thanks to all for the help and support for her role, and generous leaving gifts.

For the time being, Ell will endeavour to meet school visit requests and Corinna will liaise with the Gairloch High School SMART group. There is, possibly, a new volunteer, who will support these aspects of our community engagement.

8. Exhibitions

Notes from the most recent EPG meeting, 18 March, with the updates on planning undertaken, have been circulated. Two new exhibitions have just opened and been well received. The focus is now on the detailed planning and marketing for the RSA exhibition in the autumn.

9. 'Ever Greener' task force

Pauline's update summarised the ongoing tree planting and grounds maintenance by volunteers. There is increasing engagement with local people who have wildlife and plant expertise as we

progress the baseline surveys for a Biodiversity Enhancement plan. Activities are being initiated in collaboration with the Highland Ranger service, Slattadale project and the SMART group from Gairloch High School.

To date, all work, including protection against deer predation, has been made possible by donations of plants and materials. However, such generosity may need to be supplemented by some support funding in future if we are to succeed in our ambitions.

10. Operational matters

- i) Front of House: The volunteer rota remains stretched on occasion. Eilidh requested that we are mindful our demands on the time of employed staff, particularly when exhibition changeovers are underway.
- ii) Retail: Eilidh and Barbara are ensuring that the stock is replenished as possible and are confident that we can maintain our quality offer for this season.
- iii) Café: Jean reported that, as yet, we have been unable to find an assistant for the staffing vacancy, though have a short-term (and very capable) stand-in. We are therefore, to our detriment, still unable to open on Saturdays.

The quotation received for the essential work on the noisy extractor fan did not provide sufficient detail to be confident that it would resolve the issue. Further information is to be requested.

Considerations continue as how best to improve the roadside signage for Am Bàrd.

We agreed that the wood which might have been used for benching on the café balcony, should, if possible, be sold.

- iv) Facilities and Health & Safety: Gordon is expecting to meet with Guy to be given information about premises issues and work to be undertaken. He will also meet soon with Eilidh and Barbara.

11. Any Other Business

- i) Pauline advised that our general policies (though not the curatorial policies) are due for review. She will, initially, undertake any obvious updating, then request those with particular responsibilities for the different sections to check for further amendments needed, before circulating to everyone for comment before the next Board meeting.
- ii) The 2026 AGM is booked for Monday 26 October, with Alison MacLennan as the speaker.

12. Summary of Action Points

Corinna and Pete to prepare a cash flow forecast for the Roundhouse project expenditure, once we have the full picture of grants secured.

Roy to review all costings for the Geology Trail and propose the most appropriate ways to solicit individual donations. **Corinna** to apply to two funders to try to fill the funding gap already known.

Pauline to liaise with local wildlife and plant experts to work towards baseline surveys of the Outdoor Museum sites for biodiversity enhancement planning.

Eilidh and Barbara to try to elicit further details relating to the Café fan noise reduction quote and determine the best way forward.

Gordon to meet firstly with Guy, then Eilidh and Barbara, on premises matters, to determine priorities - possibly the Gents' urinal flushing system.

Pauline to circulate drafts of updated general policies to those responsible for each.

13. Dates of next meetings

The next Executive meeting will take place on Tuesday 26 May.

The next full Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 15 July at 4.30pm.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5.40 pm.